Impact of Smoking on Nutrition and the Food Poverty Level in Tanzania

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Abstract
This study considers the effect of household cigarette expenditure on food poverty indicators in Tanzania. We first compare expenditure patterns as well as the household size of non-smokers and smokers. We find that the majority of non-smokers and smokers have low incomes, and that the mean total per capita expenditure (proxy for income) of non-smokers is slightly higher than those of smokers. On the other hand, the mean household size of non-smokers was smaller compared to that of smokers suggesting that smokers should have spent more on food. Next, we estimate and compare daily calorie intake between both groups. Almost 19 percent of non-smokers were found to be below the poverty line. The corresponding value for smokers was almost 24 percent. Estimates from a multiple linear regression on the determinants of per capita daily calorie intake reveal that per capita cigarette consumption appears to negatively affect daily calorie intake significantly. Given that the majority of all respondents belong to a low income group, this suggests that expenditure on cigarettes may be at the expense of calorie intake.